

What is claimed is:

1. An apparatus for exhausting pollutant in a microwave oven, the apparatus comprising:

5 a sensor part formed at a predetermined portion of the microwave oven, for detecting fumes and/or moisture contained in polluted air generated during a cooking process;

a controller for determining whether or not amount of the fumes and/or moisture detected by the sensor part is greater  
10 than a predetermined reference value; and

a fan driving part operated, when the amount detected by the controller is greater than the reference value, by a driving signal from the controller and allowing air containing the pollutant to be inhaled and then removed from an interior.

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2. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the sensor part comprises a detecting sensor installed in an intake duct part of the microwave oven.

20 3. The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising an exhaust hole formed at a predetermined portion of the microwave oven, and allowing the air discharged by the fan driving part to be exhausted to an exterior.

4. The apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

a discharge duct part allowing the air inhaled by the fan driving part to be discharged into the interior; and

5 a filter disposed in the discharge duct part, for filtering the pollutant contained in the inhaled air.

5. A method for exhausting pollutant in a microwave oven, the method comprising the steps of:

10 if foods are cooked and fumes and/or moisture are generated, detecting the fumes and/or moisture at a detecting sensor of the microwave oven; and

comparing amount of the detected fumes and/or moisture with a first reference value to operate a blower fan when the amount is greater than the first reference value and not to  
15 operate the blower fan when the amount is equal to or less than the first reference value, and continuing to perform the detecting step.

20 6. The method according to claim 5, further comprising the steps:

maintaining an operation of the blower fan when the amount of the fumes and/or moisture detected after the blower fan is operated is greater than a second reference level; and

stopping the operation of the blower fan when the amount of the fumes and/or moisture detected after the blower fan is operated is equal to or less than the second reference level.

5        7. The method according to claim 5, wherein, while the blower fan is operated, the air containing polluted air is exhausted to an exterior.

10       8. The method according to claim 5, wherein the air inhaled by the blower fan is filtered and is then discharged to an interior.

9. A method for exhausting pollutant in a microwave oven, the method comprising the steps of:

15       comparing an amount of fumes and/or moisture contained in the pollutant generated during a cooking process with a first reference value;

operating a blower fan when the amount is greater than the first reference value;

20       purifying the pollutant; and

stopping the operation of the blower fan when the amount of the pollutant detected after the purifying step, is less than a second reference value.

10. The method according to claim 9, wherein the purifying step is performed by exhausting the air containing the pollutant to an exterior.

5 11. The method according to claim 9, wherein the purifying step is performed by purifying the pollutant through a filter and discharging the purified air to an interior.

10 12. The method according to claim 9, wherein the first reference value is a reference value for determining an amount of the fumes and/or moisture generated at an initial cooking stage.

15 13. The method according to claim 9, wherein the second reference value is a reference value for determining a purification degree of an interior environment when the pollutant is exhausted out of the interior by some degree.

20 14. The method according to claim 9, wherein the first reference value represents a higher pollution degree than the second reference value.

15. An apparatus for exhausting pollutant in a microwave oven, the apparatus comprising:

a detecting sensor formed at a predetermined position of the microwave oven, for detecting fumes and/or moisture contained in pollutant;

a blower fan operated in accordance with a control signal  
5 from the detecting sensor; and

an exhaust hole through which the air inhaled/discharged by the blower fan is discharged to an exterior and/or a discharge duct part through which the air inhaled/discharged by the blower fan is discharged to an interior.

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16. The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the microwave oven is an over-the-range type.

17. The apparatus according to claim 15, wherein the  
15 discharge duct part comprises a filter for filtering the pollutant.